

Revised 05-2017



Utah Department of Public Safety
Highway Safety Office

TOGETHER FOR LIFE PROJECT

WORKPLACE BOOKLET

Increasing Seat Belt Use
in San Juan County



MOST adults (93%) in
San Juan County agree they
should **ALWAYS** wear seat belts.

(Center for Health and Safety Culture, 2013)



As an influential leader
in your workplace, we
need your support to
increase seat belt use
and to improve the
health and safety of
our rural communities.

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Utah Department of Public Safety
Highway Safety Office
5500 Amelia Earhart Drive, Suite 155
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116
Phone: 801-366-6040
Fax: 801-366-6044

Center for Health and Safety Culture
Montana State University
P.O. Box 170548
Bozeman, MT 59717-0548
Phone: 406-994-7873
Fax: 406-994-7285
<http://www.CHSCulture.org>

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TOGETHER FOR LIFE — A CALL TO ACTION

Not wearing a seat belt remains a leading risk factor for death and serious injury in Utah.¹ Unfortunately, seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than the statewide average in urban areas.² The Highway Safety Office (HSO) of the Utah Department of Public Safety has partnered with rural Utah counties to increase seat belt use. The Together for Life Project is a multi-year pilot project to confront the seriousness of not wearing a seat belt and build hope that communities can work together to reduce risk and create positive change.

Building on the strengths and resources of Utah communities, the Together for Life Project offers strategies to increase seat belt use and engage stakeholders across Utah. This Workplace Booklet provides guidance for workplace leaders on how to increase seat belt use.

Actions focus on two key behaviors:

- always wearing a seat belt, and
- getting others to always wear a seat belt.

The Workplace Booklet contains several tools to grow these behaviors among all employees. Increasing seat belt use requires a collective effort. As an influential leader in your workplace, we need your support to increase seat belt use and to improve the health and safety of our communities.





BOOKLET OVERVIEW

Missing work due to injury from traffic crashes, lost productivity, and financial loss are burdensome to the individual and also to the employer.³

- Nationally, over a 5-year period, people involved in motor vehicle crashes who were not wearing a seat belt lost approximately 7.3 million work days, and lost \$566 million in wages.³
- \$1.25 billion in workplace costs were due to lack of seat belt use.³

Not wearing a seat belt can be devastating. Developing a culture of safety at work that promotes the importance of always wearing a seat belt and having others always wear a seat belt reduces risk. Workplace leaders can be involved in the effort to increase seat belt use by initiating specific action steps. This Workplace Booklet provides guidance for workplace leaders on how to increase seat belt use.

The Workplace Booklet contains several components.

SECTION A: Tools to Support the Role of Workplaces to Increase Seat Belt Use

This section includes facts about seat belt use in Utah to help you better understand your community and to help guide conversations. This section includes community perceptions about seat belt use and the misperceptions that can affect seat belt use, print media, sample workplace emails, and a conversation guide to clarify existing norms about seat belts; reveal gaps between values, beliefs and behaviors; and motivate action to change.

SECTION B: Action Steps

This section contains specific action steps that workplaces can take to increase seat belt use. Action steps include: implementing a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt and implementing driver agreements. This section also includes a sample policy and communication tools such as a sample meeting agenda, PowerPoint presentation, and an employee handout to support your action steps.

SECTION C: References

SECTION D: Appendices

In partnership with the Utah Department of Public Safety, the Center for Health and Safety Culture at Montana State University developed a survey to better understand the beliefs and perceptions of adults in Utah regarding seat belt use. This section includes the Utah Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use Key Findings Report.

SECTION A: TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF WORKPLACES TO INCREASE SEAT BELT USE

As a workplace leader, it is your responsibility to create a workplace where safety is the number one priority. Working to increase seat belt use is essential because not wearing a seat belt can result in devastating consequences.

Several tools to support workplace efforts to increase seat belt use among all employees include:

- facts about seat belt use in Utah's rural communities;
- community perceptions and effects of misperceptions;
- clarifying workplace norms about seat belt use;
- print media;
- sample workplace emails about seat belt use; and
- a conversation guide.

Section A.1. Facts About Seat Belt Use in Utah's Rural Communities

- A motor vehicle crash occurs approximately every 9 minutes in Utah.¹
- A person is injured in a crash approximately every 23 minutes in Utah.¹
- A person dies in a crash approximately every 39.5 hours¹
- Over the past 10 years, approximately 35% of crash deaths in Utah involved unrestrained occupants.¹
- Unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.¹
- Approximately \$1.54 billion dollars was estimated statewide to be the economic loss due to motor vehicle crashes in Utah (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).¹
- Hospital and emergency department charges for the treatment of Utah residents in motor vehicle crashes were \$163 million.¹

A significant impact on Utah's rural communities

- Seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than in urban areas.¹
- Rural crashes were over 3 times more likely to be fatal than urban crashes.¹
- Occupants in rural crashes were 2.1 times more likely to be unrestrained than urban occupants.¹

SECTION A

TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF WORKPLACES

FACT IS:

MOST Adults Always Wear Seat Belts

	San Juan
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2012 ²	62%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2013 ²	55%
Self-Reported "Always" Wear a Seat Belt, 2013 ⁴	54%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2014 ²	47%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2015 ²	61%
Observed Seat Belt Use, 2016 ²	64%

**Protocol was changed between 2012 and 2013.*

MOST Adults Believe Wearing Seat Belts Is Important⁴

	San Juan
Adults who agree "it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt"	94%
Adults who agree they should always wear a seat belt	93%
Adults who agree they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt	94%
Adults who report having a family rule about wearing a seat belt (among those with families)	67%

MOST Adults Believe It Is Their Responsibility As A Driver To Make Sure Others Are Wearing A Seat Belt.⁴

	San Juan
Adults who agree it is their responsibility to make sure others were wearing their seat belts when they were the driver	90%

See Section D for more details on the Utah Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use.



Section A.2. Community Perceptions and Effects of Misperceptions

Within the multi-year Together for Life Project, surveys to understand seat belt use among adults in rural Utah were administered. We have learned that Utah residents have protective beliefs and behaviors about seat belt use, but many don't believe that others share these same positive views.⁴

Norms Influence Perceptions

What are Norms?

Norms are values, beliefs or behaviors shared by most members of a group or community. Communities have norms; teams have norms; and workplaces have norms. Examples of shared values include a commitment to safety, honesty, and hard work. Shared beliefs may include expectations like workplace leaders should model behaviors, and shared behaviors may be that workplace leaders enforce workplace policies.

Norms are powerful because they provide guidance on how we fit in with the culture. Workplace norms are particularly powerful as they not only guide how new and existing employees will behave at the workplace, but norms influence behaviors outside of the work environment too. Norms are not the same as policies or rules. Policies and rules codify norms – they make norms explicit. However, we have all experienced a work environment where the norm in an organization contradicts the actual policy.

Norms are often misunderstood. For example, while most adults do NOT smoke cigarettes, high school students often perceive that most adults do smoke. That is, students think the norm is that most adults smoke – when in reality – that is NOT the norm. However, this misperception puts these students at greater risk for smoking.

Key findings emerge from Utah's Community Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use data that reflects both hope and concern about the beliefs that adults have about seat belt use.

- **HOPE** is expressed in data that show that the majority of adults who responded have attitudes that are protective.⁴ **MOST** adults always wear seat belts, and most adults believe wearing seat belts is important.⁴
- **CONCERN** is reflected in the fact that many of these same adults do not believe that most other adults in their community share these same positive views.⁴ Research indicates that when people have misperceptions like these, they are less likely to wear their seat belts.

SECTION A

TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF WORKPLACES

The community survey revealed misperceptions: MOST San Juan County adults (93%) agree that they should always wear a seat belt.⁴

However, many adults have misperceptions about seat belt use in their community.

- 46% San Juan County adults do NOT think that most adults in their community would agree it is important to protect themselves by always wearing a seat belt.⁴
- Most adults in San Juan County (94%) do NOT think most adults in their county always wear a seat belt.⁴

MOST drivers in San Juan County (90%) believe it is their responsibility to get others to wear a seat belt.⁴

MOST (90%) agree they are comfortable asking others to wear a seat belt.⁴

MOST (71%) drivers are asking others to wear a seat belt.⁴

However,

- 41% of San Juan County adults do NOT think most adults in their community would agree it is the driver's responsibility to get others to wear a seat belt.⁴
- 82% of San Juan County adults do NOT think most drivers in their community always or almost always make sure everyone is wearing their seat belts.⁴



Section A.3. Tools to Clarify Workplace Norms about Seat Belt Use

The first step in increasing seat belt use among employees is to clarify workplace norms. This process will establish an important foundation for your policy and establish clear expectations for behavior.

TOOL 1. PRINT MEDIA

Print media is available from your community coordinator. We encourage you to place the print media as soon as possible in areas of high visibility for your employees. The print media is designed to reach workplace employees—not necessarily the public. Places like meeting rooms and lunch rooms are all appropriate locations. To contact your community coordinator, go to www.togetherforlifeutah.org.

TOOL 2. SAMPLE WORKPLACE EMAILS ABOUT SEAT BELT USE

These emails clarify workplace norms and can be sent to all staff.

From: [Workplace Leader]
To: [All Staff]
RE: Seat Belt Use

Your safety is our priority! Wearing a seat belt is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself from traffic-related injuries. Did you know...

MOST adults in San Juan County (93%) agree they should always wear a seat belt.¹

MOST drivers in San Juan County (90%) believe it is their responsibility to get others to wear a seat belt.¹

MOST (90%) agreed they are comfortable asking others to wear a seat belt.¹

MOST (71%) drivers are asking others to wear a seat belt.¹

Over the coming weeks and months, we will be engaging in various efforts to increase seat belt use among our employees. I encourage you to make sure you always wear a seat belt and get others to always wear a seat belt.

[Signature]

1. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2013). *Utah community survey of adults on seat belt use*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. N=1338

From: [Workplace Leader]
To: [All Staff]

RE: Drivers are responsible to always wear a seat belt and get others to always wear a seat belt

In Utah alone, it was estimated that a person is injured in a crash approximately every 23 minutes, and over the past 10 years, approximately 35% of crash deaths in Utah involved unrestrained occupants.¹ Unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.¹ When a driver gets behind the wheel, they have many responsibilities. His or her safety and the safety of others is essential. In our county,

MOST drivers in San Juan County (90%) believe it is their responsibility to get others to wear a seat belt.²

MOST in San Juan County (90%) agree they are comfortable asking others to wear a seat belt.²

MOST drivers in San Juan County (71%) are asking others to wear a seat belt.²

Seat belts save lives and I encourage you to make sure you always wear a seat belt and get others to always wear a seat belt.

[Signature]

1. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2013). *Utah community survey of adults on seat belt use in Box Elder, San Juan, and Sanpete Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. N=1338
2. Perkins, MPH, Ron. (2016). *Utah Observational Surveys on Seat Belt Use*

Tips for Effective Conversations

- Encourage broad participation—don't allow one person to dominate, seek input from everyone.
- Build connections between various thoughts—listen for what is emerging.
- Provide enough time for meaningful engagement—this investment will pay off many times over in the future.



TOOL 3. CONVERSATION GUIDE

While print media and emails are important to help share information, two-way communication is much more effective in changing beliefs. We strongly encourage you to engage employees in structured conversations about seat belt use to help establish a strong foundation for policy. A straight-forward conversation guide is included at the end of this section.

We recommend that you begin by engaging in this conversation with those you supervise. Then, have them repeat the process with their employees (until everyone in the workplace has participated in a conversation). Having the conversations take place between supervisors and those they supervise increases clarity about workplace expectations. Investing in this time will pay off in the long run by increasing adherence to policy.

Conversation Guide on Always Wearing a Seat Belt

Purpose

Clarify existing norms about seat belts; reveal gaps between values, beliefs and behaviors; and motivate action to change.

Guidance

Active, two-way conversation is one of the best ways to foster lasting, sustainable change in beliefs and behaviors. We often have a tendency to move right to action (such as just creating a rule and telling everyone to follow it). However, if we spend time aligning values and beliefs (e.g., the why behind the rule), it will help the rule become naturally ingrained into the culture. There will be less resistance and push back, and compliance will be easier.

Conversations can occur between two people (a supervisor and supervisee) or among small groups. We strongly recommend keeping the group size to four people or fewer—smaller is more effective. It is critical that everyone is actively engaged in the conversation.

We strongly encourage you to invest at least 15-20 minutes for these conversations in one session (more time will be required if there are multiple small groups).

TOGETHER FOR LIFE CONVERSATION GUIDE

1. Group size should be four people or smaller. If the group is larger than four people, break into smaller groups and allow additional time for groups to share thoughts between topics.

2. Provide a copy of this page for all participants.

3. Discuss each topic in order. Spend about 7-10 minutes on each topic depending on group size (allow more time for groups of 3 or 4 and more time to share out with multiple groups).

Topic #1. **Protective Beliefs and Behaviors about Seat Belt Use in Utah⁴**

A recent survey of adults (including adults in our county) revealed:

- Most adults in San Juan County (93%) agree they should always wear a seat belt.
- Most adults in San Juan County (94%) agree they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt.
- Most families in San Juan County (67%) have a rule about always wearing a seat belt.

Questions

- > What do these results say about Utah adults?
- > How do these results reflect adults in this workplace?

[If there is more than one group, share key points from each group.]

Topic #2. **Discrepancies between Beliefs and Behaviors⁴**

Survey results of adults (including adults in our county) reveal discrepancies between beliefs about seat belt use and actual seat belt use behaviors:

- Most adults in San Juan County (94%) agree "It is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt."
- Most adults in San Juan County (93%) agree "I should always wear a seat belt."
- And yet only 54% of adults report always wearing a seat belt.

Questions

- > What surprises you about these results?
- > What steps can we take at this workplace to increase seat belt use?

[If there is more than one group, share key points from each group.]

SECTION B. ACTION STEPS

Enacting specific action steps in the workplace can increase seat belt use. Two actions include: (1) implementing a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt and (2) implementing driver agreements. The goal of a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt is to establish a clearly written document about the workplace's expectations about always wearing a seat belt and getting others to always wear a seat belt. Implementing driver agreements aims to enhance a culture of safety in the workplace by making all drivers responsible for ensuring that everyone is always wearing a seat belt.

STEP 1.

Implement a Workplace Policy about Always Wearing a Seat Belt

After clarifying your workplace norms with all employees, it is important to codify the workplace's seat belt expectations in policy. Wearing a seat belt is an important component of safety and should be required by policy.

Review your policy and make sure it is current and reflective of the safety culture you are intentionally creating. If you do not have a policy, a sample policy is provided in Tool B.1 Policy Sample.

Here are several important items to consider:

- Does the policy assign responsibility to the driver for making sure everyone is wearing a seat belt?
- Does the policy make it clear that supervisors are expected to enforce the policy?
- Does the policy apply to all staff?
- Does the policy establish clear consequences for not wearing a seat belt?
- Does the policy encourage wearing a seat belt while not at work?

After updating your policy, make sure you share and discuss it with all employees. It is important to communicate why you are implementing a seat belt use policy, what employees need to do to comply with the workplace policy, and what the consequences will be if the policy is not followed. Provide an opportunity to clarify any questions. Engaging in dialogue about the policy will make it real and establish clear expectations. Tools to help you communicate with employees include:

- Tool B.2.1. Meeting Agenda Example
- Tool B.2.2. PowerPoint Slide Presentation
- Tool B.2.3. An Employee Handout to support your efforts.

Enforcing the Policy

To achieve high seat belt use, the policy must be enforced. Here are a few tips:

- Reinforce expectations about following the policy with supervisors.
- Include a section on following policies in annual performance evaluations.
- Revisit the policy on a regular basis during safety meetings and trainings.
- Conduct safety compliance checks of the seat belt use policy. When employees know that you take this policy seriously and will routinely check for compliance, they may be more likely to buckle up.



TOOL 1. POLICY SAMPLE

There are numerous examples of seat belt use policies that you can use for your own workplace. Provided is one sample.

Sample Policy

[Name of Workplace] believes that seat belts are very important. Seat belts save lives and reduce the risk of serious injury. At [Workplace], we care about you. The safety of our employees is our number one priority. It is the policy and expectation at [workplace] that all employees always wear a seat belt when operating a vehicle or riding in a company or personal vehicle while on duty. Additionally, employees are expected to always wear a seat belt and ensure everyone is always wearing a seat belt on all company property. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that everyone in his or her vehicle is always wearing a seat belt.

Workplace policies requiring employees to always wear a seat belt are an effective tool that protect employees and help reduce potential costs for an employer. In a recent survey in our community, adults who indicated their workplace had a policy about always wearing a seat belt were 62% more likely to always buckle up, as compared to those who did not have a workplace policy.⁴

By requiring employees to always wear a seat belt even on short trips, employers can reduce the likelihood of serious injury or death for their employees. Improving the safety of employees just makes good business sense.

Most adults in our community always wear their seat belts.⁴ However, there are still individuals who are not always buckling up. Help keep your employees safe and reduce your costs; require your employees to always wear a seat belt.

SECTION B

ACTION STEPS

Communicating to staff about the seat belt use policy to always wear a seat belt is essential. A meeting agenda outline, PowerPoint slide presentation, and employee handouts are provided to help you to communicate about the seat belt use policy throughout the entire workplace.



TOOL 2. MEETING AGENDA EXAMPLE

Creating a meeting agenda will help facilitate a workplace safety meeting about the implementation of the workplace policy to always wear a seat belt. The agenda provides important information that employees need to know including the date of the meeting, location and time. The agenda also provides a quick introduction to the topic you will be discussing. An agenda example is provided and can be sent via email or through interoffice mail.

Agenda Example

Purpose: To discuss the new seat belt use policy about always wearing a seat belt at [name of workplace].

[Date]

[Time]

[Location]

Attendees: All Employees

Meeting Overview: We will be discussing the [new/revised] policy at [name of workplace] about always wearing a seat belt. We will discuss the importance of always wearing a seat belt, implementation of the [new/revised] policy, what employees need to do to comply with the workplace policy, and what the consequences will be if the policy is not followed. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions about the new seat belt use policy.

TOOL 3. POWERPOINT SLIDE PRESENTATION

What you will need:

- A computer and projector
- PowerPoint slides downloaded from togetherforlifeutah.org
- Copies of your Workplace Seat Belt Use Policy
- Together For Life Card downloaded from togetherforlifeutah.org

SLIDE 1.



**TOGETHER
FOR LIFE**

**BUILDING A
CULTURE OF
SAFETY**

WWW.TOGETHERFORLIFEUTAH.ORG

Presenter Notes:
This slide is the introduction to your presentation. Introduce yourself. Share that employees are at your presentation to obtain information about the seat belt use policy being implemented in the workplace.

(Slides continued on next page)

SLIDE 2.

**2. OUTLINE**

- Seat Belts in the Workplace....Why is it Important?
- Shared Beliefs and Behaviors
- What's Your Reason?
- It's a Priority at [Workplace Name]!
- The Seat Belt Use Policy at [Workplace name].
- What You Need to Do and Know...
- It's Everyone's Responsibility.

Presenter Notes:
This slide is meant to provide the audience with a snap shot of what is to come in your presentation.

SLIDE 3.

**3. SEAT BELTS IN THE WORKPLACE...
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
BECAUSE... YOU ARE IMPORTANT!****Presenter Notes:**

The purpose of this slide is to share the latest information about the importance of always wearing a seat belt. Some important statistics include:

- A motor vehicle crash occurs approximately every 9 minutes in Utah.¹
- A person is injured in a crash approximately every 23 minutes in Utah.¹
- Unrestrained crash occupants were over 30 times more likely to be killed than restrained crash occupants.¹
- Seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than in urban areas.¹
- Rural crashes were 3.3 times more likely to be fatal than urban crashes.¹
- Occupants in rural crashes were 2.1 times more likely to be unrestrained than urban occupants.¹

The take away message from this slide is that the workplace cares about its employees and seat belts are essential. Buckling your seat belt can save your life!

SLIDE 4.**4. SHARED BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS****Presenter Notes:**

The purpose of this slide is to connect all employees based on their shared values, beliefs and behaviors about seat belt use. Most adults in San Juan County (93%) agree that they should always wear a seat belt, and most adults always wear a seat belt.⁴ Most drivers in San Juan County (90%) believe it is their responsibility to get others to wear a seat belt.⁴ Most in San Juan County (90%) agreed they are comfortable asking others to wear a seat belt, and most drivers in San Juan County (71%) are asking others to wear a seat belt.⁴ Highlighting the shared protective beliefs and behaviors about seat belt use helps to grow these protective beliefs and behaviors.

SLIDE 5.**5. WHAT'S YOUR REASON?****Presenter Notes:**

Discuss the reasons people have for wearing a seat belt.

SLIDE 6.**6. IT'S A PRIORITY AT (WORKPLACE NAME).****Presenter Notes:**

The goal of this slide is to provide a clear understanding that there are no excuses for not wearing and seat belt and the expectation at your workplace is that everyone will always wear a seat belt.

SLIDE 7.**7. OUR SEAT BELT USE POLICY.****Presenter Notes:**

(Provide a Copy of your Workplace Policy). Discuss the policy and answer any questions employees have about the seat belt use policy.

SLIDE 8.**8. WHAT YOU NEED TO DO AND KNOW...****Presenter Notes:**

The purpose of this slide is to provide a detailed explanation of what employees need to do to comply with the seat belt policy, and what the consequences will be if the policy is not followed. Remember, effective communication reduces employees' uncertainty and is vital to the successful implementation of a seat belt use policy in the workplace.

SLIDE 9.**9. IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.****Presenter Notes:**

(Provide Handout #1: Together for Life Card). Have employees complete Handout #1: Together for Life Card and discuss their answers with their coworkers as an interactive learning opportunity. This is the conclusion of your presentation. Wrap up the discussion by highlighting the desired behaviors you are seeking to grow. Those include always wearing a seat belt and getting others to always wear a seat belt. Growing protection and reducing harm associated with not wearing a seat belt requires everyone to get involved.

ACTION STEPS

Providing employees with a handout is an important tool to enhance your implementation of a workplace policy about always wearing a seat belt. Distributing a handout that employees can take with them is a way to reinforce the workplace's position on always wearing a seat belt.

The following card can be found at togetherforlifeutah.org and can be distributed to employees. The card is based on an intervention shown to increase seat belt use among non-users.⁶

www.togetherforlifeutah.org

STEP 2.

Implement Driver Agreements

Driver agreements are designed to be a contract between employers and employees.⁷ In a driver agreement to always wear a seat belt, the driver agrees that he or she is aware of and understands the organization's policy about always wearing a seat belt, and agrees to abide by the policy which includes always wearing a seat belt and ensuring other occupants in the vehicle are always wearing a seat belt.⁷ Further, the agreement identifies the consequences of violating the agreement.⁷ Driver agreements are a simple strategy to increase seat belt use by requiring drivers to always wear a seat belt and to ensure others in the vehicle are always wearing a seat belt.

TOOL 1. A DRIVER AGREEMENT EXAMPLE

As an employee who is granted the privilege of driving company vehicles at [workplace], and/or personal vehicles for company use, I agree to the following:

1. I will always wear a seat belt...,and
2. I will ensure other occupants in the vehicle are always wearing a seat belt.

Failing to abide by these agreements will result in corrective action. Corrective action will include:
1st violation – A verbal warning will be given to me.

2nd violation – A written warning will be issued to me and I will be suspended from driving a company vehicle or my personal vehicle for company use for [#] days.

3rd violation – I will lose driving privileges at [Workplace Name] which may result in termination of my employment.

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Key Findings Report



Adult

San Juan County

Based on the 2013 Utah Community
Survey of Adults on Seat Belt Use in San Juan County

Prepared for the
Highway Safety Office,
Utah Department of Public Safety



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Increasing Seat Belt Use in Rural Utah

Executive Summary

The Highway Safety Office (HSO) of the Department of Public Safety has recognized that significant disparities exist between urban and rural rates of seat belt use among citizens of Utah. The Utah Seat Belt Observational Survey revealed that seat belts are used less frequently in rural areas of Utah than the statewide average in urban areas.¹ Driving or riding in a vehicle without a seat belt is a well-recognized contributing factor to fatality, serious injury, and harm associated with traffic crashes.

A recent survey conducted by the Center for Health and Safety Culture on behalf of the HSO revealed strong positive norms regarding protective behaviors and attitudes about seat belts among adults in three rural counties of Utah: Box Elder, San Juan, and Sanpete.² However, many adults misperceived these positive norms.² For example, while most adults are wearing seat belts, many adults do not believe that MOST others in the communities are engaging in these protective behaviors.² Similarly, adults significantly underestimated the prevalence of protective beliefs and behaviors about seat belts among adults in the communities.²

Most adults support strong enforcement of seat belt laws and agree with encouraging others in the vehicle with them to wear their seat belts.² However, many adults misperceived these positive norms.² For example, while most adults strongly agreed that a driver has the responsibility to make sure others in the vehicle wear a seat belt, many did not believe that MOST adults in their community felt the same way.² Recommendations are made to correct misperceptions and address gaps in knowledge.

Background

The Center for Health and Safety Culture developed a survey to better understand the behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of adults in rural Utah regarding seat belts. The survey was conducted using a paper survey mailed to a representative sample of households in Box Elder, San Juan, and Sanpete Counties between June and September, 2013. About 1,200 households were sent an introductory letter followed by a survey and up to two follow-up requests. In San Juan County, 374 individuals responded resulting in an overall response rate of 31%, and a confidence interval for the results is $\pm 5.0\%$ with a 95% confidence level. The results of this survey only represent the behaviors and beliefs of those adults in the three counties surveyed and cannot be generalized to adults in other counties in Utah or adults in other states.

San Juan County Key Findings

Seat Belt Use among Adults – Actual and Perceived Norms

In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 54%, report always wearing their seat belt. However, 94% perceive that most other adults in their county do NOT always wear their seat belt (Q14).

- 46% report always wearing their seat belt when driving within a few miles of their home. However, 92% perceive that most other adults in their county do not always wear their seat belts (Q12).
- 90% report always wearing their seat belt when driving many miles from their home. However, 80% perceived that most other adults in their county do not always wear their seat belts (Q13).

Observational Studies Reveal Most Adults Wear Their Seat Belts

Observational studies completed in 2015 show MOST adults are wearing their seat belts.

- In 2015, observational studies conducted in San Juan County revealed **61% of adults were wearing their seat belts¹**

San Juan County Key Findings

Most Adults Have Positive Beliefs about Wearing Seat Belts

- **In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 72%, strongly agree that “it is important to protect myself by always wearing a seat belt.” However, 79% perceive that most other adults in their county do NOT strongly agree (Q15).**
 - 46% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they don’t want to get a ticket (Q16).
 - 75% strongly or mostly agree that they wear a seat belt because they want to set a good example for their children (Q17).
 - 45% strongly or mostly disagree that seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you (Q18).
 - 80% strongly or mostly agree that people are less likely to be seriously injured or killed if they always wear their seat belt (Q19).
 - 82% strongly or mostly agree that seat belts help prevent lifelong disabilities such as paralysis, spinal cord injuries and serious brain injuries (Q20).
 - 79% strongly agree that parents should require their children to always use an appropriate child car seat or, when big enough, a seat belt (Q24).
- **In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 70%, strongly agree that they should always wear a seat belt (Q21).**
 - 74% strongly agree that they want people they care about to always wear a seat belt (Q22).
 - 64% strongly agree that “people who care about me want me to always wear a seat belt” (Q23).
 - 79% strongly or mostly agree that they are comfortable wearing their seat belt even if others in the vehicle are not (Q26).
- **In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 50%, indicate they are extremely likely to wear their seat belt every time they are in a vehicle. However, 92% perceive that most other adults in their county are NOT extremely likely (Q27).**

San Juan County Key Findings

Many Adults Have Family Rules and Workplace Policies about Wearing Seat Belts

- In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 67%, indicate their family has a rule about always wearing a seat belt (15% said they do not have a family rule, 11% said they do not know, and 7% said they do not have a family) (Q28).
- In 2013, many adults in San Juan County, 44%, indicate their workplace has a policy about always wearing a seat belt (12% said they do not have a workplace policy, 15% said they do not know, and 30% said they do not have a workplace) (Q29).

Most Adults Support Seat Belt Enforcement

- MOST adults in San Juan County, 72%, strongly or mostly agree that local law enforcement should enforce Utah seat belt laws (Q25a).
 - However, 59% perceive that most other adults in the county would NOT feel the same way (Q25b).
 - And, 31% perceive that most law enforcement officers in their county would NOT feel the same way (Q25c).
 - Among those surveyed, 42% indicate they would receive a ticket half the time or more often if they did not wear their seat belt at all for the next six months (Q30).

San Juan County Key Findings

Getting Others to Wear a Seat Belt: Actual and Perceived Norms

- In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 44%, report always making sure others were wearing their seat belt when they were the driver. However, 92% perceive that most other adults in their county did NOT always do this (Q31).
 - Some adults in San Juan County, 28%, report always making sure others were wearing their seat belt when they were the passenger (Q32).
- In 2013, MOST adults in San Juan County, 79%, mostly or strongly agreed that it was their responsibility to make sure others were wearing their seat belts when they were the driver. However, 59% perceive that most other adults in their county did NOT feel this way (Q33).
 - 82% mostly or strongly agree that they are comfortable asking other people to wear their seat belts when they were the driver (Q34).
 - 49% mostly or strongly agree that they were comfortable asking other people to wear their seat belts when they are a passenger (Q35).
 - 54% report they are extremely likely to ask everyone in the vehicle to wear a seat belt when they were the driver. However, 88% perceived that most adults in their county were NOT extremely likely to do the same (Q36).
 - Only 27% report they are extremely likely to ask everyone in the vehicle to wear a seat belt when they were a passenger (Q37).

San Juan County Key Findings

Recommended Next Steps

- ✓ **Correct misperceptions about seat belt use in the county.**
 - Seek to communicate to all citizens that MOST adults in the county are wearing seat belts¹.
- ✓ **Take steps to bolster strategies to increase seat belt use in the county.**
 - Seek to communicate to all aspects of the community – elected officials, law enforcement leaders, business owners, schools, families and citizens, that
 - MOST adults believe it is important to always wear a seat belt;²
 - MOST adults want people they care about to always wear a seat belt;²
 - MOST adults support enforcement of Utah seat belt laws;²
 - MOST families have a family rule about always wearing a seat belt. ²
- ✓ **Take steps to increase the likelihood that citizens will encourage others to wear their seat belts.**
 - Build on the existing strong positive norms outlined in this report:
 - MOST drivers make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt;²
 - MOST drivers believe it is their responsibility to make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt.²

Questions to Foster Meaningful Dialogue³

Questions to Focus Collective Attention

- What opportunities can you see that the data are revealing?
- What do we still need to learn about this issue?
- What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than you do say about these data?

Questions to Reveal Deeper Insights

- What has had real meaning for you from what you've seen in the data?
- What surprised you? What challenged you? What encouraged you?
- What needs clarification?
- What's been your major learning, insight, or discovery so far from these data?

Questions to Create Forward Movement

- What's possible here?
- What will it take to create change?
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?

Adapted from Brown, Isaacs, and Community, 2005³

References

1. Perkins, MPH, Ron. (2015). *Utah observational surveys on seat belt use*
2. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2013). *Utah community survey of adults on seat belt use in Box Elder, San Juan, and Sanpete Counties*. Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. (N=1338)
3. Brown, J., Isaacs, D., & Community, W.C. (2005). *The World Café: Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter* 11st ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.